

**Minutes of CRASC Meeting**  
**216 Hart Senate Office Building**  
**Washington, DC**  
**March 19, 2001**

The Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission met in Washington, DC, at the invitation of Senators Gregg and Leahy, to provide a Congressional briefing on Commission accomplishments, needs and Program benefits. Connecticut River basin Senators and Representatives were provided with packages describing the Commission.

Ms. Melody Burkins, from Senator Leahy's staff, hosted the meeting. Ms. Burkins, Ms. Abbie Meador (Representative Olver) and Mr. Ryan Kelly (Representative Neal) invited participation from the House and Senate.

Mr. Ron Regan, Vermont Commissioner, delivered the Commission presentation.

Mr. Bob Stira, Northeast Generation Services, read a statement from NGS describing the company investment in migratory fish restoration and supporting funding for the Program.

Mr. Tom Miner, Connecticut River Watershed Council, described the Council's primary organizational focus as migratory fish restoration. He said that the Council and the Commission share a common vision with real public benefits that are also embraced by the American Heritage River initiative.

Mr. Charlie Olchowski, Trout Unlimited, described the Atlantic Salmon Egg Rearing Program, an environmental education program, initiated by the organization to promote stewardship of Atlantic salmon once fry are stocked in local streams. He pointed out that salmon restoration is about more than the number of adult salmon returns, it is about partnerships, healthy rivers, and people who voluntarily work to preserve and protect natural resources.

Ms. Joan Godsey, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher from the Leverett Elementary School, praised the Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program for its practical value in the classroom. She spoke with passion about how she has used the Atlantic Salmon Egg Rearing Program to develop and empower tomorrow's steward's and leaders among today's students.

Mr. John O'Leary, Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, described the objective of his agency in developing empowered community stewards for restoring, preserving and protecting the natural resources of the Connecticut River. He has found fish restoration to be an effective tool that creates a nexus between the resource and the community. The linkage is key to success, as is the agency partnership.

Questions followed the presentations. They focused on the degree of Program success, reasons for poor return years, USFWS Fisheries priorities, and how to decide among competing priorities when there are limited funds.

Mr. Matt Dowd, Senator Gregg's Office, closed the meeting by pointing out that appropriations decisions have to be made based on a program's efficiency and effectiveness and he indicated that the Commission had demonstrated that the Program was efficient and effective.

Ms. Stephanie Daigle (Environment and Public Works Committee) subsequently put together language for a bill to re-authorize the Compact for ten years and appropriate \$9 million to fund the project. A similar proposal is required in the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee.

The Commission provided Ms. Daigle with an itemized list of needs.

The Commission reimbursed travel expenses for the following Commissioners: Mr. Duncan McInnes, Mr. Charlie Thoits and Mr. Bob Jones at a total cost of \$435.71.

## **CRASC CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING PARTICIPANT LIST**

### **Non-Government Organizations**

Bob Stira - Northeast Utilities  
Tom Miner - CT River Watershed Council  
Charlie Olchowski - Trout Unlimited  
Joan Godsey - Leverett Elementary School  
John O'Leary - Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs  
Jim Carroll - CT River Salmon Association  
Dick Bell - CT River Salmon Association

### **CRASC Members - Non-Federal**

Rick Jacobson - CT  
Bob Jones - CT Public Sector  
Wayne MacCallum - MA  
Tom Menard - MA Public Sector  
Duncan McInnes - NHFG  
Charlie Thoits - NH Public Sector  
Ron Regan - VT

### **CRASC Members - Federal**

Mamie Parker - USFWS Region 5 - Acting RD

### **Other CRASC**

Janice Rowan USFWS CT River Coordinator, CRASC Executive Assistant  
Steve Gephard - CTDEP

### **Federal**

Jaime Geiger - USFWS - FR  
Ron Howey - USFWS, FR  
Bill Knapp - USFWS-WO, FR  
Morgan McCosh - USFWS-WO, FR  
Steve Rideout - USGS-BRD, CAFRC

### **Congressionals**

#### **Connecticut**

Amy Pellegrino - Rep. Robert Simmons  
Kirsten Cutler - Sen. Lieberman  
Michele Mellenbach - Rep. Johnson

#### **Massachusetts**

Marty Walsh - Sen. Kennedy  
Ryan Kelly - Rep. Neal  
Abbie Meador - Rep. Olver

**New Hampshire**

Stephanie Daigle - Senate EPW - Smith

John Pemberton - Senate EPW - Smith

Patty Doerr - Senate EPW - Smith

Mathew Dowd - Sen. Gregg

**Vermont**

Geoffrey Brown - Sen. Jeffords

Melody Burkins - Sen. Leahy

**Commerce Committee**

Stephanie Bailenson - Senate Commerce - McCain/Snowe

Camilla Boyte - Senate Commerce - McCain/Snowe

**Industry Lobby**

Jennifer Diggins - NUSCO